



BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH'S REPORT

for

1940.

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Public Health Department,
The Watch Oak,
BATTLE, Sussex.

12th November, 1941.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
to the
BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT.
for 1940.

CORRIGENDA.
4. 12. 41.

Page 10. Civil Defence.

After "First Aid Commandant" delete "till May 1940".

Next line delete "after May Mr.W.F.G. Carter.A.R.P.S"

Last paragraph but two after "There are 6 First Aid Party Depots" read "one at Battle" delete "and" before "Robertsbridge" and after it add "and Winchelsea".

Page 11.

Paragraph 2 should read:-

"Each Mobile First-Aid Party comprises a party car with 4 men and driver. Ambulances and cars for sitting cases are sent in addition as required".

Paragraph 3.

For "Non-mobile parties" read "Non-mobile First Aid Parties."

Paragraph 7.

For "5 minutes past 11" read "5 minutes to 1".

BATTLE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Mr.Chairman and Members of the Battle Rural District Council:-

I have the honour of presenting the seventh Annual Report of the Battle Rural District.

It is greatly shortened, as was the Report for 1939, by direction of the Ministry of Health. That it appears so late is due to the fact that everyone immediately concerned in its compilation has been unusually busy; moreover the information that is omitted is not that which takes longest to prepare.

With the Chief Sanitary Inspector & Surveyor engaged during nearly the whole year with extra duties that took nearly all his time, and with two Sanitary Inspectors gone to serve in H.M. Forces the work of the Public Health Department necessarily suffered somewhat.

Mr.Ramsden's chief duty was inspecting dairies and cowsheds in Routine and taking samples of milk under the Milk and Dairies Order. This important work had to be dropped.

The only cowsheds visited were those for which a new application for registry was made and a few that had been reconstructed.

Routine Housing inspections entirely ceased. Building had stopped. Many houses stood empty. Complaints were fewer. Water samples were taken when required and inspections on complaint made as in peace time. Defects were also discovered by chance.

Inspections under the Factories & Workshops Act. Our custom has been to attend to complaints made by the Factory Inspector. In peace time it was not possible to pay as many routine visits as could be wished. War has stopped even these.

Shops Acts. Next to nothing could be done under these acts in peace time, in war nothing.

Meat. All private slaughterhouses were closed. Government slaughterhouses serving the District were set up at Hastings and Rye. Mr.Francis inspected/the Rye slaughterhouse both for Battle Rural District and Rye. at

Infectious disease. The work went on as in peace time except that the Medical Officer of Health was unable to visit as a matter of routine houses in which scarlet fever had occurred.

Schools. Mr.Dunford had been inspecting all the public elementary schools in the district. This work ceased.

Refuse collection. Mr.Harris took over this work from Mr.Jenner. With it goes the important and heavy work of salvage.

Moveable dwellings being nearly all by the coast ceased to need attention since they were taken over by the Army.

Hoppickers' lodgings were thoroughly investigated. The great mass of the work has fallen on Mr.Harris & Mr.Francis, both of whom have undertaken war work as well.

Figures for employment in 1940 cannot be obtained. The Gypsum mine employed about 230 of whom some 150 worked underground.

Next to Civil Defence which ~~is~~ decided by affects of public health, the most important business to note in this report is that which led at last to a scheme of free immunization against diphtheria for all who chose to take advantage of it.

The delays and discussions have been useful in enabling the laymen and medical men concerned to clear their minds and see each other's point of view and difficulties.

The number of children sent to the District for safety dwindled as the year passed. At the beginning there may have been between two and three thousand; by the end of the year probably not more than six or seven hundred. It is difficult to estimate the number of grown up immigrants.

I have to thank all who have helped the Public Health Department and here especially those who helped in the compilation of this report. Some have been named. Few Departments at the Council Offices can have escaped interrupting questions.

Especially I have to thank Mr.A.N.Campany, Clerk to the Public Health Department for unfailingly rising to every occasion.

I am, Mr.Chairman, Miss Courthope & Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

ALAN MOORE,

Medical Officer of Health.

STATISTICS & SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Area in acres	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	117,059.
Population in 1940	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	31,030.
No. of inhabited dwelling houses, estimated	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	9,772.
No. of rateable premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	10,891.
Rateable Value	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£192,410. (1.1V.41).
Sum represented by a penny rate for the financial year ending March 31st 1940.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	£770. 11s. 2d.

Live Births:		Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	..	..	..	168
Illegitimate	..	..	..	151
				10
				7
				319
				17

Live birth rate per 1,000 of Resident Population .. 10.82.

Birth rate per 1,000 for England & Wales .. 14.6

Stillbirths:		Males	Females	Total
Legitimate	..	..	..	4
Illegitimate	..	..	..	3
				1
				7
				1

Stillbirth rate per 1,000 total births live & still .. 23.25.

Deaths (civilian only)	..	..	..	Male	Female	Total
				201	226	427

Nett death rate per 1,000 of estimated population .. 13.76.

Corrected death rate .. 11.00.

The corrected death rate is the nett death rate
multiplied by an Areal comparability Factor .. 80.

Death rate for England & Wales 14.3.

Maternal Mortality.

Deaths from Puerperal Infection	..	..	..	..	..	1.
Other Maternal causes	..	..	..	..	..	Nil.
Maternal Mortality rate	..	..	..	..	..	2.90.
Maternal Mortality rate for England and Wales from Puerperal Infection	..	..	..	..	..	0.52.
Other maternal causes	..	..	..	..	..	1.64.

Infant Mortality

Deaths of infants under one year of age:		Male	Female
Legitimate	..	..	..
Illegitimate	..	..	..
		5	5
		1	1
Infant death rate per 1,000 live births	..	..	..
Infant death rate for England & Wales	..	..	..
		35.11.	55.00.

Death rate of legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	3.13.
Death rate of illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	117.64.
Deaths from measles, all ages	Nil.
Death rate from measles per 1,000 of population for England & Wales .. .. .	.02.
Deaths from whooping cough, all ages	Nil.
Death rate from whooping cough per 1,000 of population for England & Wales .. .. .	.02.
Deaths from diarrhoea under 2 years of age	Nil.
Death rate from diarrhoea & enteritis for children under 2 years of age per 1,000 live births in England & Wales	4.6.
Deaths from cancer	Males 26 Females 34 Total 60
Death rate for cancer per 1,000 of population ..	1.93.
Cancer death rate for England & Wales, not available since 1938, then	1.66.

Deaths from Cancer including Sarcoma.

All deaths are included for which any form of cancer or sarcoma was mentioned in the death certificate. The primary seat of disease is given where known and the probable primary seat where more than one site is given without specification. Two cases of cerebral tumour not recorded as cancer are included. Fuller information received after certification may cause a slight discrepancy between the Registrar General's figures and those of our Death Register.

Male, including 2 due to cerebral tumour 26. Female 32.

Ages	Males	Females
25 - 30	1	-
35 - 44	1	-
45 - 54	4	3
55 - 64	6	15
65 - 74	4	9
75 & above.	10	5

<u>Seat of Disease</u>	Males	Females
Alimentary canal including oesophagus but not pharynx	10	8
Breast	-	7
Lungs	2	2
Other	14	15

IMMUNIZATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA

In 1940 the Council provided immunizing material and material for Schick-testing to practitioners who applied for it for suitable cases, but no organized scheme of immunization was possible.

IMMUNIZATION AGAINST DIPHTHERIA

The following is a short and simplified account of the steps that led to a working system in 1941.

On February 4th 1937 the Council resolved that material for protecting twelve people should be supplied free provided the cost did not exceed £4.

On November 4th 1937 the Council removed the restriction on the amount of material that might be supplied.

On November 2nd 1939 a recommendation of the Public Health Committee to supply free immunization to all children attending or who would normally attend the public elementary schools was lost. Council decided to wait till the next year's estimates were framed.

In January 1940 Ministerial Memorandum 170 on diphtheria immunization was issued. It stated "it is obviously desirable that the advantages of this form of protection should be brought to the notice of parents and guardians of children over one year of age and that where practicable the necessary facilities should be offered to them".

On February 29th 1940 a second recommendation of the Public Health Committee to supply free immunization was lost in Council. All serious opposition was on grounds of expense.

In March Mr.E.C.Kingdon offered £100 if a scheme of free immunization for at least 3 years were brought into effect in a reasonable time. Col.J.E.H.Sawyer offered to give the injections. These generous offers and others were considered and on May 2nd the Council voted for free immunization for three years provided the cost to the Council were not more than £40 in the first year and £100 in each of the two years following.

This vote was not adequate for a fully working scheme and the perpetual movement of people in and out of the District brought the matter to a stand till November when the Medical Officer of Health discussed it with the County Authorities and others. Mr.Kingdon's offer lapsed and it was plain that the work would be far more than one man even of Col.Sawyer's energy could undertake.

On December 9th Ministerial Circular 2230 of December 7th was received. This announced that immunizing material would be supplied at Government expense and urged Local Authorities to secure the immunization of as many children as possible.

On December 30th 1940 the Finance & Staff Committee recommended "that this Council undertake the free immunization of all children up to 15 years of age, provided they attend for this purpose at the appointed times and places".

The recommendation was accepted by Council on January 2nd 1941. With the recommendation were others that were found to need modification but it was now possible to get to work and immunization on a large scale began on February 3rd 1941.

GENERAL PUBLIC HEALTH WORK.

The Chief Sanitary Inspector & Surveyor reports as follows:

Nuisances detected	46.
Nuisances abated (including 28 outstanding on 31.12.39)	71.
No. of inspections in regard to drainage	294.
No. of inspections in regard to water supply	237.
No. of water samples taken	33.
No. of premises connected to main water supplies ..	46.
No. of inspections in regard to dwelling houses ..	142.
under Public Health & Housing Acts.	
No. of houses repaired	41.
No. of houses reconstructed (Sec.11)	7.
No. of Demolition Orders made	3.
No. of houses demolished	Nil.
(This is in accordance with the Ministry of Health instructions that actual demolitions are to be suspended for the duration of the war).	
No. of visits to cowsheds	51.
No. of new cowsheds constructed	9.
No. of cowsheds reconstructed	2.
No. of cowsheds registered during the year	13.
No. of milk samples taken (Methylene Blue Test) ..	80.
No. of samples passed	61.
No. of samples failed	19.
No. of new building inspections	128.
No. of hoppickers dwellings (visits to farms)	57.
No. of visits re Infectious Diseases	52.
No. of houses disinfected	32.
No. of visits in connection with Refuse Collection ..	16.
No. of inspections under Food & Drugs Act	48.
<u>Premises Registered (Food & Drugs Act):</u>	
Ice Cream	25.
Food preparation premises	23.
Slaughterhouse visits	99.

MEAT INSPECTION.

As a result of Government control of meat supplies, the slaughter of food animals was discontinued in the Rural District of Battle and centralised at the Government Slaughterhouse in the Borough of Rye, where the meat was inspected by the Sanitary Inspectors working in conjunction with the Rye Sanitary Inspector.

During the year 12,053 lbs of meat were found to be diseased or otherwise unfit for food and withheld from sale for human consumption.

WAR SALVAGE SCHEME.

Early in the year the Ministry of Supply urged Local Authorities to put into operation a scheme for the collection of salvage, and this Council ~~has been successful in doing so~~, introduced a voluntary collection throughout their area with success.

Later it became compulsory upon every Authority in the Country having a population of 10,000 or over to form a scheme, but by this time the Battle Council had their scheme well organised.

The following figures give an indication of the material collected and the value obtained to December 1940:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Weight</u>			<u>Value received.</u>		
	tons	cwts	qrs	£.	s.	d.
Books & magazines	44	15	1	222	-	-
Newspapers	18	19	3	101	13	8
Mixed waste	75	10	3	265	8	-
Strawboard	4	12	-	13	-	-
Mixed rags	5	4	-	41	8	-
Scrap iron	101	5	-	212	17	5
Bones	6	13	1	14	8	-
Bottles and jars	6	16	1 (approx)	20	-	-
	261	16	1	£890	15	1

No. of visits made in connection with Salvage Collection 84.

NEW DWELLINGS 1940

Parish	Dwellings built during 1940.	Dwellings not exceeding £19 Rateable Value.	Incomplete dwellings.
Ashburnham	-	-	-
Battle	1	1	1
Beckley	1	-	-
Bodiam	-	-	6
Brede	5	2	-
Brightling	-	-	-
Broomhill	1	1	1
Burwash	-	-	-
Catsfield	-	-	-
Crowhurst	1	1	-
Dallington	1	-	-
East Guldeford	-	-	-
Etchingham	-	-	2
Ewhurst	2	-	-
Fairlight	5	2	3
Guestling	1	-	2
Icklesham	2	-	-
Iden	-	-	-
Mountfield	1	1	-
Northiam	4	2	1
Ore	-	-	-
Peasmarsh	5	4	-
Penhurst	-	-	-
Pett	2	1	-
Playden	1	1	-
Rye Foreign	-	-	-
Salehurst	-	-	-
Sedlescombe	-	-	-
St. Thomas the Apostle Winchelsea	-	-	-
Ticehurst	-	-	-
Udimore	-	-	-
Westfield	4	2	-
Whatlington	-	-	-
	37	18	16

Dwellings built in 1940 by private enterprise 37.

Dwellings (included in the above) not exceeding £19 R.V. 18.

Dwellings incomplete i.e. (i) Actually in course of erection
but not finished at 31st Dec. 1940; and
(ii) Commenced in 1940 but
abandoned and remaining unfinished at 31st Dec. 1940 16.

The Battle Rural District Council built no houses in 1940.

In 15 parishes there were no houses built nor in course of
erection at 31st December, 1940.

SCHOOLS

Only three schools in the Battle Rural District were closed in 1940 for infectious or contagious disease. All were closed by the advice of the County Medical Officer of Health as follows:-

<u>School</u>	<u>Reason for Closing</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>No. days.</u>
Udimore	Heavy colds	31.1.40	9.2.40	8.
Battle	Measles & Influenza	1.2.40	9.2.40	7.
Playden	German measles & Influenza	4.3.40	15.3.40	10.

EVACUATION

At the beginning of the year there were probably fewer than 3,000 extra children in the District.

The many Sick Quarters had by February 5th been reduced to three: at 26 Mount Street, Battle, at The Croft, Etchingham and Keitholme, Catsfield. Merivale the emergency hospital at Ore was on a care and maintenance basis.

In June the District ceased to be reception area for unaccompanied children. On June 23rd many left Battle for South Wales.

An exception was made for the Brockley County School of 170 children which stayed at Ticehurst.

On July 6th Merivale and the remaining sick quarters were given up at the direction of the Ministry of Health.

Parents were next encouraged to let their children emigrate to North America. A good many were examined by the Medical Officer of Health to this end. On July 12th emigration was abandoned because it was said the men of war required for escorting the emigrant ships could not be spared.

A number of children then left for Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire.

In September when London and other towns were being frequently bombed people were allowed into the District, and all sorts came, both from the places that were worst bombed and from the coastal towns. People came and went as they liked.

In December the Ministry knowing that children were being kept in London because they could not go to the places of their parents' choice, again allowed unaccompanied children to come to the Battle District.

No figures are to be had for the end of the year but on March 31st 1941 there were 235 unaccompanied children; 182 mothers with 246 children; 222 others including teachers and helpers and blind people.

PORT OF RYE

In 1940 the following vessels entered direct from foreign ports:

The Marcel Jean M.V. 135 tons Reg. French on April 13th in ballast from Dieppe for the chemical works to load pitch.

April 24th in ballast from Havre.

May 3rd ditto ditto

May 13th ditto ditto

On May 20th the ketch-rigged yacht Albatros III 26 tons reg. from Breskens, Holland calling at Newport and Bologne. She had 8 Dutch refugees on board of whom 3 were women. One was a Dutch seaman from a steamer that had given the yacht a tow into the Scheldt and had been mined.

On May 21st the yawl yacht Sally 10 tons, Belgian registered but British owned, with three English on board.

MILK.

There are 439 milk producers in the District. Of these 7 are licensed for producing and 3 for producing and bottling Tuberculin tested milk.

To produce Accredited milk 40 licences were issued and to produce and bottle 10.

CIVIL DEFENCE

Sub-Controller: Col.W.E.Hume-Spry, D.S.O.

First Aid Commandant: till May 1940 Lt.Col.J.E.H.Sawyer, M.D.,
M.R.C.P.,
after May Mr.W.F.G.Carter A.R.P.S.

The following means exist for dealing with casualties:

1. Two mobile first aid posts, one at Battle in medical charge of Dr.W.E.Davidson and one at Robertsbridge in medical charge of Dr.E.C.Maxwell.

2. In 1940 there were four first aid party combinations one each at Battle, Etchingham, Guestling and Northiam. Each combination consisted of 2 first aid parties, 3 ambulances and 2 cars for sitting cases.

Changes have been made in 2 and since this report appears so late in 1941 the arrangements since May 1941 are described.

There are 6 First Aid party depots: 2 at Battle and 1 each at Etchingham, Guestling, Northiam and Robertsbridge.

Four First aid parties are based at Battle. Of these two are mobile and two for Battle only.

One party works from Etchingham, two parties work from Guestling, two from Northiam and one party works from Robertsbridge.

There is also a First Aid party, not mobile, at Winchelsea.

Each Mobile party comprises an ambulance, and a car for sitting cases, with four men besides the driver of the ambulance.

Non mobile parties have no ambulance or car attached to them but rely on stretcher bearers and cars in the town allowed to be used for sitting cases.

At Catsfield and Winchelsea is stationed a rescue party of 10 men. These are trained in First Aid and so can assist the First Aid parties.

Members of First Aid parties are also trained in rescue work.

Training in decontamination has begun for all members of Rescue Parties and for 50% of members of First Aid Parties.

The first bomb to fall in the Battle Rural District was noted at 5 ~~and~~ past 11 a.m. on May 22nd 1940. The only casualty was a pony at Ticehurst. No human civilian casualties occurred till August. In 1940 there were 32 casualties among civilians. None was fatal.

During August, September and October it was more usual to see an air battle than to meet a herd of cows on the road. By mid-November over 1000 H.E. bombs were said to have fallen in the District.

ILLNESS.

1940 was a healthy year, except that the number of diphtheria cases was the highest yet recorded for the District as far as more serious notifiable disease goes. A comparison with 1939 also a healthy year shews this:-

Cases of diseases other than tuberculosis, measles and whooping cough notified in 1939 and 1940:

Disease	Cases notified		Cases admitted	Deaths.
	1939	1940	to hospital in 1940.	
Scarlet fever	65	16	13	-
Diphtheria	-	9	9	3
Enteric including paratyphoid	2	1	1	-
Puerperal pyrexia	4	2	-	-
Pneumonia	13	21	2	10.
			(1 to Royal East Sussex Hospital).	
Ophthalmia neonatorum	3	1	-	-
Anterior poliomyelitis	4	-	-	-
Cerbro-spinal meningitis	1	2	2	-
Bacillary dysentery	8	-		
Erysipelas	2	3 (1 a soldier)		-

Measles and Whooping Cough became notifiable too late in 1939 for comparison.

Disease	Cases notified. 1940	Cases admitted to hospital, 1940.	Deaths.
Measles	92 (one patient omitted diagnosis from rubella doubtful).	2 (1 to Pinehurst, Hailsham, R.D.C. Temporary Hospital).	
Whooping Cough	17	1	-

One patient notified for scarlet fever was found to have diphtheria. His case is recorded under diphtheria. He may have had a mixed infection.

Of the pneumonia deaths 6 were of unnotified patients. Deaths from pneumonia as a terminal event with other disease are not included.

AGE GROUPS

Disease	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-34	35-44	45-64	65 & over
Scarlet fever	-	-	-	-	2	7	3	2	1	1	-	-
Diphtheria	-	1	-	-	1	2	2	1	1	-	1	-
Paratyphoid B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-
Puerperal pyrexia	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-
Pneumonia	-	1	-	1	-	2	1	-	3	2	8	3
Ophthalmia neonatorum	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cerebro-spinal meningitis	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-
Erysipelas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	2	-
Measles	-	1	1	1	2	10	16	2	31	-	1	-
Whooping cough	2	4	2	1	-	6	2	-	-	-	-	-

SCARLET FEVER IN 1940.

Incidence in parishes for each month:-

<u>Month</u>	<u>Parish and Number in each.</u>
January	Burwash 1, Sedlescombe 1, Ticehurst 1, Whatlington 1.
February	Salhurst 1.
March	Battle 2, Catsfield 2, Sedlescombe 1.
April	Battle 1.
May	Dallington 1, Etchingham 1.
June	Westfield 1.
July	Westfield 1.
September	Beckley 1.

TUBERCULOSIS

Action under Section 62 of the Public Health Act 1925: none required but was very nearly.

Action under the Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925: none required.

Cases on Register 31st December 1940:

<u>Pulmonary</u>			<u>Non-Pulmonary</u>		
<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
50	47	97	20	28	48

Cases notified for the first time:

The cases of patients new to the District whose disease was known before they entered it are not included even though notified on Form A in the District.

<u>Age Groups</u>	<u>Respiratory</u>		<u>Non-Respiratory</u>	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Under 1	-	-	-	-
1 - 4	-	-	-	1
5 - 14	-	-	1	2
15 - 24	2	4	-	-
25 - 34	-	-	-	-
35 - 44	1	-	1	-
45 - 54	-	1	-	-
55 - 64	-	-	-	-
65 & above	-	1	-	-
	3	6	2	3

TUBERCULOSIS DEATHS

That is to say deaths of people who lived in the District and died there and deaths of people who belonged to the District but who died outside it in hospital or elsewhere.

Deaths of people who died in the District but lived outside it are not included.

Age Groups	Respiratory.		Non-Respiratory.	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 1	-	-	No deaths.	
1 - 4	-	-		
5 - 14	-	-		
15 - 24	1	1		
25 - 34	-	1		
35 - 44	2	1		
45 - 54	4	-		
55 - 64	1	2		
65 & above	2	1		

The deaths of one man and of two women were of patients whose names were not in the Tuberculosis Register. The name of one of the women had been removed from it, the patient being noted as cured.

T H E E N D .

